which incorporates the majority of issues of concern to the developing countries. Besides several bilateral and some select group country meetings were held on the side lines of the UNCTAD meetings at Bangkok to garner their support for Indian stand on various issues at WTO.

Threat to Self-Sufficiency in Food

1845. SHRI E. BALANANDAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the hard earned self sufficiency in food is now threatened in view of withdrawing the quantitative restrictions on trade and subsequent unrestricted dumping of cheap foodgrains by the developed countries in the Indian market; and

(b) if so, the steps Government propose to take in this situation?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) and (b) The phased removal of quantitative restrictions as are being maintained by Indian under Balance of Payment (BoP) grounds, including on some agricultural products has to be effected by 1.4.2001 in order to implement the rulings and recommendations of the Dispute Settlement Body (DSB) of the World Trade Organisation, which held that India was no longer justified in maintaining quantitative restrictions on imports on balance of payment grounds. However, adequate protection to the interests of farmers can be provided through appropriate adjustments in tariffs. Besides, necessary trade protection measures such as imposition of anti-dumping duties, safeguard actions or antisubsidy countervailing actions can be taken under specified circumstances. India has also been highlighting its concerns regarding food security and rural employment in the context of mandated negotiations under WTO Agreement on Agriculture.

Export of Marine Products from Kerala

1846. SHRI E. BALANANDAN: Will the Minister of COM MERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA) has extended its activities to Kerala; and

(b) if so, the contribution made by MPEDA to increase the exports of marine products from the State?